

REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ACTION

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MEETING

DATE: 1/6/03

AGENDA SECTION: Consent Agenda	ORIGINATING DEPT: Administration	ITEM NO. D-10
ITEM DESCRIPTION: Request for Funding / Olmsted County Historical Society		PREPARED BY: S. Kvenvold

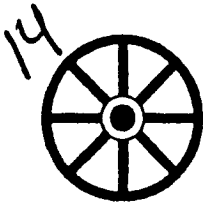
The Olmsted County Historical Society is requesting \$30,000 from the City of Rochester to assist in funding some of the activities and functions undertaken by the Society (see attached).

If approved, the funding should be appropriated from the 2002 Contingency Account.

COUNCIL ACTION REQUESTED:

Request a motion appropriating \$30,000 from the 2002 Contingency Account for the Olmsted County Historical Society.

COUNCIL ACTION: Motion by: _____ Second by: _____ to: _____



OLMSTED COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

January 3, 2003

Al Schafer, President Dear Members of the Rochester City Council;

**Mary Jane Schmitt,
V-P**

**Marvin Berreth,
Treasurer**

**Jean Williams,
Secretary**

Alan Calavano

Kay Caskey

Hal Henderson

Roland Hirman

Paul Julsrud

Terry Lee

Jean Michaels

Clark Nelson

David Pennington

Don Sudor

Jane Yunginger

**Executive Director
John Hunziker**

I am writing you with a somewhat unique request today, but first I want to thank you on behalf of the Olmsted County Historical Society (OCHS) Board of Directors and the people of Rochester and Olmsted County for your past generosity to the our organization. The continued quality and expansion of services, as well as the improvement of our facilities has been appreciated and noticed by everyone coming to the History Center.

We are projecting 2003 to be an extremely busy year for the Historical Society. In response to undertaking a large capital project at the 93 year-old Mayowood Mansion and increasing and improving educational programming to meet our community's thirst for history-based activities, the Historical Society must enlarge its staff. The role of the OCHS Educator has been expanded from a part-time to a full-time position and a full-time maintenance position will be advertised at the beginning of the year. The Historical Society has raised money and reallocated funds to pay for a portion of both of these positions. We are requesting an allocation of \$30,000 from the City of Rochester to match our funds and guarantee these much needed additions to the OCHS Staff.

The OCHS Board and staff are excited about the financial commitments we have secured for the lofty project of re-roofing the National Register listed Mayowood Mansion. In 1999, Inspec, Inc--a Minneapolis firm specializing in historic building preservation--prepared a scope of work for the project and estimated \$535,000 for a new roof. With inflation and contingency for unknowns, the final budget will reach approximately \$600,000.

While the Historical Society has raised the necessary funds to purchase supplies/ equipment and hire contractors, the project will require a significant amount of manpower from the OCHS Maintenance Department. Maintenance staff will need to empty the entire ballroom/attic of the Mansion before tearing off the roof, as well as secure artifacts throughout house. The OCHS Maintenance Supervisor will also need to be onsite daily to oversee the project. While all of this work is going on, the History Society will still be offering its regular programming. As a result, the Historical Society must hire a full-time maintenance person, at a competitive wage to support the Supervisor. (Please see the attached letter dated 25 July 2002 for wage information and note that the Historical Society received only \$15,000 of a requested \$66,000 additional appropriation.)

Due to the popularity of our youth programs, the Historical Society recently hired a full-time Educator. By expanding the position, the Educator will be able to energize current programming, foster more community partnerships, expand youth activities, develop historical educational tools for off-site instruction, and create special events

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that will distinctively utilize the historic facilities owned by the Historical Society. It should be noted that the last two Educators strongly recommend changing the role from part-time to full-time to properly meet the demands of the position.

We hope you will look favorably on this funding request. To help substantiate this request, I am also enclosing a copy of the original budget request to the County and information from the Minnesota Historical Society on 37 cities that fund historical societies or museums throughout the state. Please note that all of the listed cities have smaller populations than Rochester. The per capita amounts they give are in the last column.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to read through this information. We believe that the Historical Society offers unduplicated services to the 89,000 citizens of Rochester and the 36,000 County citizens outside the city limits. We share the same goal of improving the social well-being of area residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Al. Schafer", followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Al Schafer
President, Board of Directors
Olmsted County Historical Society

AS/bb
Enclosures

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July 25, 2002

Olmsted County Finance Department
Christine Simonson
151 Fourth Street SE, Suite 2205
Rochester, MN 55904

Dear Ms. Simonson,

The Olmsted County Historical Society should have a working Geo-thermal heating, ventilating, air-conditioning and humidity control system up and running by the middle of August. The Society had applied for a DEED grant last year to help with the funding. That grant did not materialize so we proceeded to find partners to make it happen. We were pleased that the Olmsted County Board, the Rochester City Council, Rochester Public Utilities, the engineering firm of TSP Inc. and the Minnesota Historical Society all pitched in to make the project a reality.

Educational programming is reaching out to 6,000 children from Olmsted County and the surrounding area. We offer classes to 2nd, 3rd and 6th graders. We are planning on expanding our Rendezvous into a Hands-On-History Days to further engage the students in history. We are also going to have the tractor exhibit from the Owatonna Heritage Halls Museum installed at the History Center in time for Days of Yesteryear, August 10th and 11th.

Two large grant funded studies are concluding. We have a Cultural Landscape Report studying the landscape features at Mayowood in a final draft form that will be going to the printer within the month. We also have the final draft of the Historic Structures Report of the George Stoppel Farm being reviewed.

The County Board made a significant investment in the Society in the year 2001 and gave us a very healthy increase in 2002. I believe your investment paid off. The community is beginning to pay attention to us and seem to be pleased with our progress. We are still playing catch-up from cuts that were made in 1992. The Society was averaging 5% increase at that time. The requested appropriation would restore us to that level.

We are requesting that our base appropriation be increased to \$319,000 from Olmsted County. This equates to approximately \$2.57 per Olmsted County citizen per year using the 2000 population figure of 124,277. This new base of \$319,000 is what we would be at if we had continued with the average 5% increase since 1983. I believe that with our base at \$319,000 we can get by with smaller percentage increases in future years. Our grant writer and I have succeeded in matching the monies you have appropriated to the Society with other public, private

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and grant money and will continue to do so in the future.

Our biggest concern is that while we can raise money for capital improvement projects and for new exhibits we find that funders are not interested in funding operational money for people. We have had a position open for a grounds maintenance person for five months as we can only pay \$8.90 per hour and the local gas stations are advertising to hire attendants for \$11.50 per hour. Five of my eight staff make less than \$12.00 per hour, three more make less than \$14.00 per hour. Seven positions that are part time or seasonal are at less than \$8.50 per hour. You know better than I that finding qualified workers in Rochester, particularly people having access to our historical collections and Mayowood, at these hourly rates is not possible. The lowest hourly wages paid by the County range from \$10.46 to \$12.09. The majority of the increase in the County appropriation would be used to get us to a competitive wage standing with the rest of the people competing for workers in Rochester.

We have been able to make progress with outside funders in all areas except salaries. In fact without your past two years help our salaries would be much worse.

The Society needs your assistance in continuing our progress in making the History Center what people want it to be, a relevant Olmsted County cultural resource. To do this we need to have more operating funds so we are able to take money raised in membership, fund-raising, grants, and fees and put it back into programing, exhibits, and upgrading our educational buildings. This will give us the opportunity to leverage other money from throughout the community.

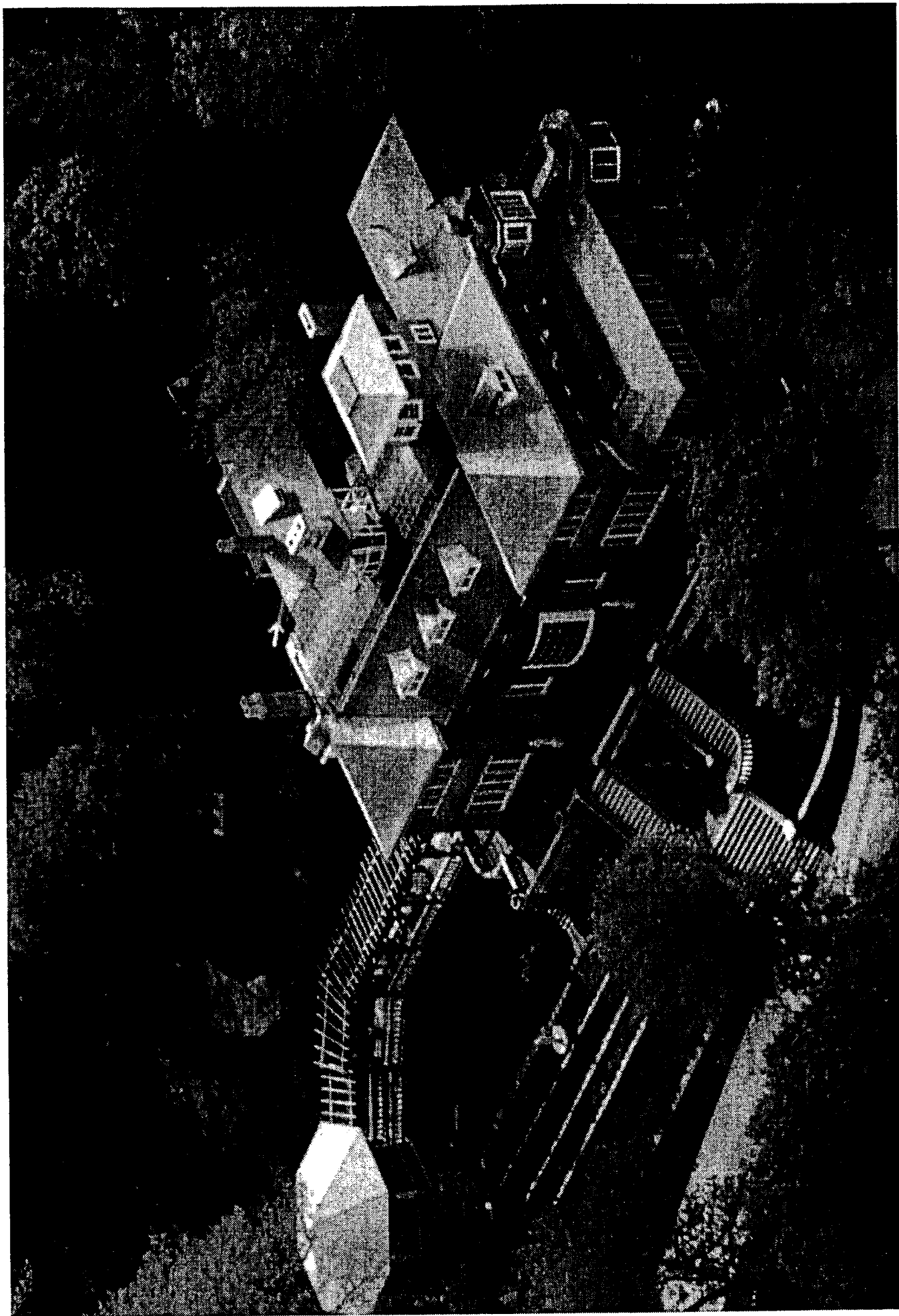
In closing I want to thank you for the time, effort and commitment you put forth working for the people of Olmsted County.

Sincerely,

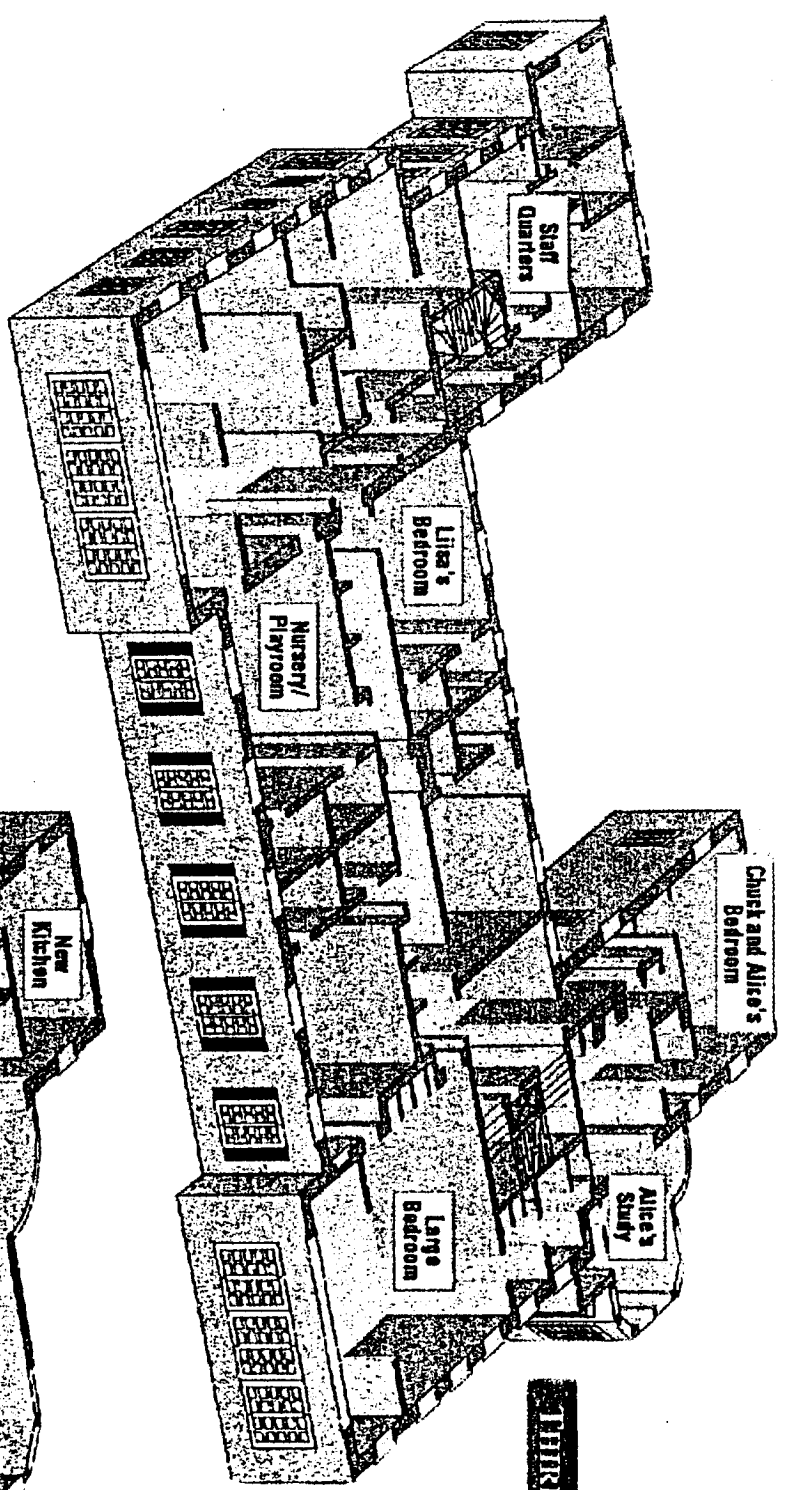
John Hunziker
Executive Director

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Cities Appropriating to Historical Societies in Minnesota			
Organization and City	Amount received	Population	Per capita
Benton County Historical Society (Sauk Rapids)	\$5,000	10,826	\$0.46
Brown County Historical Society (New Ulm)	\$10,000	13,547	\$0.74
Crow Wing County Historical Society (Brainerd)	\$100-500 several cities	13,547	
Faribault County Historical Society (Blue Earth)	\$600	3,587	\$0.18
Freeborn County Historical Society (Albert Lea)	\$10,000	18,364	\$0.54
Goodhue County Historical Society (Red Wing)	\$15,000	16,211	\$0.93
Itasca County Historical Society (Grand Rapids)	\$15,000	7,824	\$1.92
Kanabec County Historical Society (Mora)	\$6,000	3,235	\$1.85
Lac Qui Parle County Historical Society (Madison)	\$4,000	1,758	\$2.28
Lyon County Historical Society (Marshall)	\$12,500	12,828	\$0.97
Meeker County Historical Society (Litchfield)	\$10,000	6,577	\$1.52
Mille Lacs County Historical Society (Princeton)	\$1,250	4,014	\$0.31
Murray County Historical Society (Slayton)	\$2,000	2,073	\$0.96
Norman County Historical Society (Ada)	\$500	1,688	\$0.30
Otter Tail County Historical Society (Fergus Falls)	\$12,000	13,645	\$0.88
Pipestone County Historical Society (Pipestone)	\$15,000	4,406	\$3.40
Steele County Historical Society (Owatonna)	\$2,000	22,780	\$0.09
Wadena County Historical Society (Wadena)	\$1,000	4,251	\$0.24
Waseca County Historical Society (Waseca)	\$8,000	9,711	\$0.82
Winona County Historical Society (Winona)	\$17,500	27,100	\$0.65
Bay Area Historical Society (Silver Bay)	\$2,000	1,900	\$1.05
Brown's Valley Historical Society (Brown's Valley)	\$600	800	\$0.75
Cokato Historical Society (Cokato)	\$58,500	2,200	\$26.60
Golden Valley Historical Society (Golden Valley)	\$10,000	21,000	\$0.48
Lake Benton Historical Society (Lake Benton)	\$7,500	700	\$10.71
Maplewood Area Historical Society (Maplewood)	\$2,000	31,000	\$0.06
Melrose Area Historical Society (Melrose)	\$5,000	2,600	\$1.92
Minnesota Lake Area Historical Society (Mn.Lake)	\$2,500	700	\$3.57
North St.Paul Historical Society	\$2,500	12,400	\$0.20
Rockford Area Historical Society (Rockford)	\$13,398	2,700	\$4.96
Sleepy Eye Area Historical Society (Sleepy Eye)	\$3,000	3,700	\$0.81
Spring Valley Community Historical Society	\$10,000	2,500	\$4.00
Waconia Heritage Association (Waconia)	\$2,000	3,500	\$0.57
Wanda Gag House Assoc. (New Ulm)	\$5,000	13,100	\$0.38
Western hennepin County Pioneers (Long Lake)	\$500	2,000	\$0.25
Wheels Across the Prairie Museum (Tracy)	\$1,000	2,100	\$0.48
Winnebago Area Museum	\$2,000	1,600	\$1.25



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SECOND FLOOR

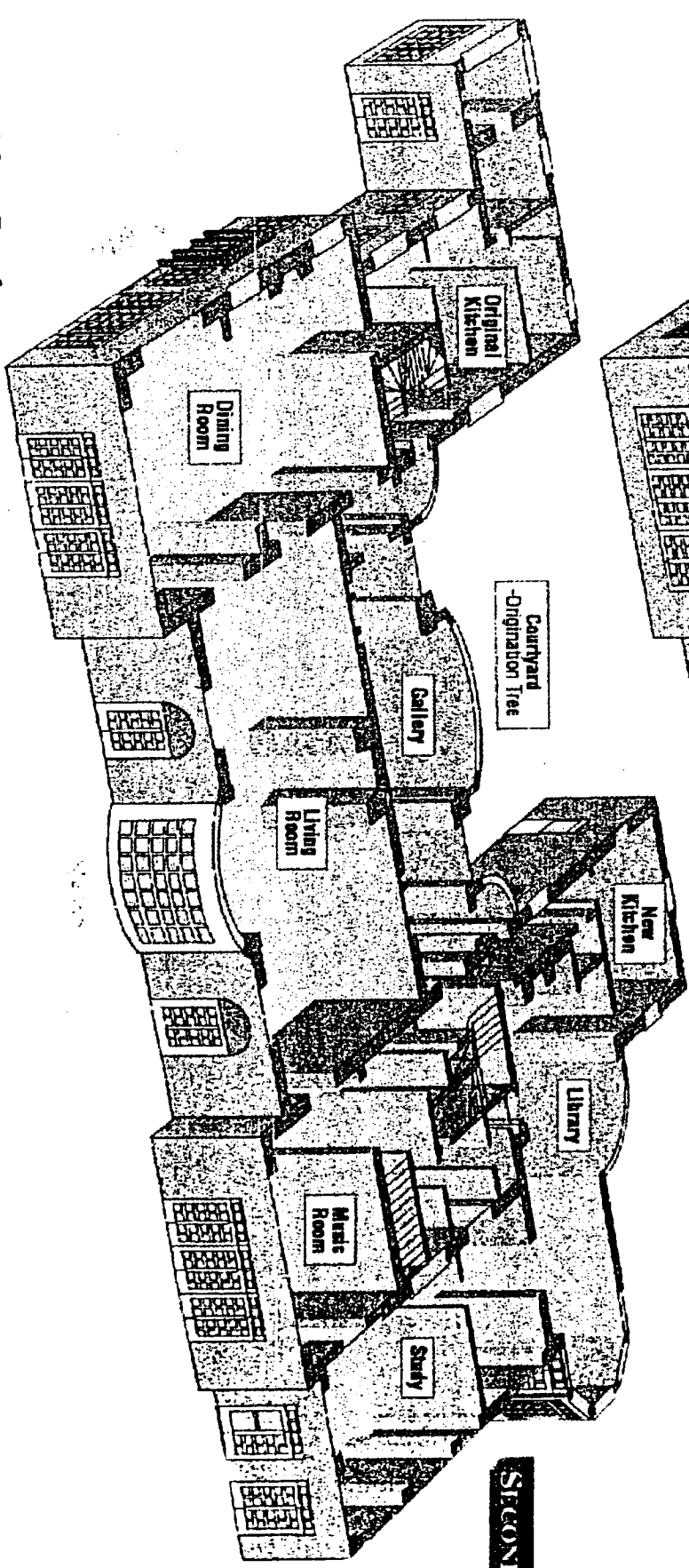


Figure 11 - Rochester
Post Bulletin Graphic - 1998